

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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R 231406Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8567

UNCLAS LAGOS 6411

FOR AF/W, AF/EX AND AID FOR AA/AFR)

E.O. 11652 : NA
TAGS : AMGT
SUBJ : AVAILABILITY OF MISSION VEHICLES TO MEET VISITORS

1. THIS EMBASSY HAS LONG BEEN CONCERNED BY THE INADEQUACY OF ITS MOTOR POOL TO MEET THE UNUSUAL REQUIREMENTS IMPOSED UPON IT BY THE FREQUENT NEED TO MAKE ADDITIONAL TRIPS BECAUSE OF NON-FUNCTIONING TELEPHONES, THE SLOWNESS OF TRAFFIC WITH A CONSEQUENT INCREASE IN AVERAGE TRIP TIME., AND THE HIGH RATIO OF VEHICLES UNDER REPAIR DUE TO POOR ROADS AND INADEQUATE MAINTENANCE. A COMPREHENSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE MOTOR POOL AND ITS NEEDS WAS CONTAINED IN THE EMBASSY'S MEMORANDUM OF APRIL 20 ADDRESSED TO OPR/ST.

2. IN ORDER TO RELEASE EMBASSY VEHICLES FOR HIGH PRIORITY PURPOSES WE HAVE NOW DECIDED THAT IT WILL HENCEFORTH BE NECESSARY TO ELIMINATE THE GREAT MAJORITY OF TRIPS BY EMBASSY VEHICLES TO THE LAGOS AIRPORT TO MEET VISITORS DURING OFFICE HOURS. VISITORS OF WHOM THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN APPRIZED WILL ORDINARILY BE ASSISTED BY THE MISSION EXPEDITER IN PROCEEDING THROUGH THE AIRPORT CUSTOMS FORMALITIES BUT THEY WILL THEN HAVE TO TAKE TAXIS INTO TOWN. UNLESS THEY ALREADY KNOW WHERE THEY WILL BE LODGED, THEY SHOULD COME DIRECTLY TO THE CHANCERY (1 KING'S COLLEGE ROAD, LAGOS ISLAND) AND

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ASCERTAIN FROM THE MARINE GUARD OR THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF THE EMBASSY WHERE THEIR ACCOMMODATIONS ARE LOCATED. ALTHOUGH TAXIS HAVE METERS, DRIVERS ARE RELUCTANT TO USE THEM AND ONE CAN EXPECT TO BARGAIN FOR THE FARE. THE EXPEDITER WILL ASSIST IN ARRANGING A TAXI INTO TOWN AND THE FARE SHOULD NOT EXCEED 10 NAIRA (15 DOLLARS). TRAVELERS SHOULD OBTAIN SUFFICIENT NAIRA FOR THIS PURPOSE AT THE CURRENCY EXCHANGE COUNTER

BEFORE LEAVING THE AIRPORT.

3. WE REQUEST THAT AF/W, AF/EX AND AID/W BRING THE INFORMATION IN THIS TELEGRAM TO THE ATTENTION OF FUTURE VISITORS SO THAT THEY WILL KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT UPON ARRIVAL. HOWEVER, WE WILL ALSO ENDEAVOR WHENEVER TIME PERMITS TO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ACCOMMODATIONS RESERVED FOR AN EXPECTED VISITOR AND WILL ASK THAT HE BE PROVIDED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN PARA 2 OF THIS TELEGRAM.

4. THE EMBASSY REGRETS THE NEED TO INTRODUCE THIS MEASURE BUT DOUBTS THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO RESCIND IT UNTIL THE MOTOR POOL HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED. WE DO NOT EXPECT THE OPENING OF THE NEW CHANCERY TO RELIEVE PRESSURE ON THE MOTOR POOL. THE CLOSURE OF THE IBADAN CONSULATE, WITH THE CONSEQUENT NEED FOR MORE TRAVEL FROM LAGOS TO THAT AREA, WILL ADD TO IT.

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